



NORTHWEST MRC

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT

All members of the Northwest Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) shall meet the following standards of conduct.

As a member of the Northwest MRC, I agree to:

Ethical Conduct

- **Scope & standards:** Maintain and abide by the standards of my profession, including licensure, certification and/or training requirements to support my MRC role
- **License status:** Report changes to professional licensure, including suspension or termination, to the MRC Coordinator
- **Affiliation:** Act in the capacity of a MRC responder and present myself as a MRC member only with prior authorization/deployment by the MRC Coordinator, or by the District Health Director or their designee
- Refrain from accepting or seeking on behalf of myself or any other person, any financial advantage or gain as a result of my affiliation with the MRC
- Abstain from publicly using my MRC affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters, or positions on any issue that do not reflect an evidence-based or evidence informed approach to public health, emergency preparedness, response, or recovery
- Avoid knowingly taking any action or making any statement intended to influence the conduct of the MRC in such a way as to confer any special benefit on any person, corporation, or entity in which I have an interest or affiliation
- **Inappropriate conduct:** Avoid inappropriate conduct and behavior, including behavior that is dangerous to others or myself (e.g., acts of violence, verbal or physical abuse, harassment)
- **Conflict of Interest:** Avoid situations that could be interpreted as a conflict of interest
- **Use of government resources:** Abstain from the use of locality and state equipment and resources for personal use
- **Substance Use/Abuse:** Refrain from transporting, storing, or consuming alcoholic beverages or illegal substances while performing volunteer duties
- Abstain from responding for duty under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances or under the influence of prescription or non-prescription medication that may impair my functioning
- **No Shows:** Contact the MRC Coordinator as soon as possible if I am not able to participate after registering and being deployed to any event, emergency response, or training
- **Recording:** Abstain from the use of audio or video recording equipment, unless authorized
- **Communication:** Respond to alerts, keep contact information current in the Virginia Volunteer Health System (www.vamrc.org/vvhs), and request assistance if I am unable to log in

Safety

- Put safety first in all volunteer activities
- Wear my MRC badge when deployed to any MRC-sponsored activity or while on site at the health department
- Dress for the environment and wear appropriate and protective clothing (closed-toed shoes, long pants, long sleeves in certain scenarios), if activated to respond
- Respect and use all equipment and supplies appropriately
- Promote healthy and safe work practices
- Take care of and be respectful of self and others
- Maintain awareness of my ability to manage stress, and my suitability for a particular assignment, task, or deployment
- Report injuries, illnesses, accidents, safety hazards, and suspicious activity to the appropriate staff member

Respect

- Refrain from using and disclosing any protected information, to which I may have access, to any person not authorized to receive such information
- Avoid commenting with, answering questions, or divulging information to the media
- Respect other persons regardless of race, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, immigration status, religious affiliation/beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender, occupation, or political affiliation
- Treat others with empathy, courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration, and humility
- Accept the chain of command and respect other volunteers, staff, and partners, regardless of their position

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the information above and the information contained within the Northwest VA Medical Reserve Corps Member Handbook. I agree to abide by the Northwest VA MRC Code of Conduct when performing my duties as a member of the Northwest VA MRC.

Volunteer Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

HIPAA AND LIABILITY POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Virginia Medical Reserve Corps

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Protects Patient Privacy

As a volunteer performing duties for the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), you may be granted access to the Protected Health Information (PHI) of our clients. The fact that an individual is or was a client of the Virginia Department of Health is PHI. Federal and state laws, including HIPAA and our policies and procedures, protect the privacy and security of this PHI.

It is illegal for you to use or disclose PHI outside the scope of your volunteer duties for the Virginia Department of Health. This includes oral, written, or electronic uses and disclosures.

The following are guidelines for using public health information:

- ★ You may use PHI as necessary to carry out your duties as a student/volunteer.
- ★ You may share PHI with other health care providers for treatment purposes.
- ★ You may NOT photocopy PHI.
- ★ You must access only the minimum amount of PHI necessary to care for a patient or to carry out an assignment.
- ★ You may NOT record PHI (such as patient names, diagnoses, dates of birth, addresses, phone numbers, etc.) on any assignments you may need to turn into your instructor, reports you may need to turn in to your program, or forms you may need to take with you.
- ★ You may only access the PHI of patients for whom you are caring/volunteering when there is a need for the PHI.
- ★ Be aware of your surroundings when discussing PHI. For example, because others may overhear you, it is inappropriate to discuss PHI in bathrooms, lunch areas or in any other public place.
- ★ When disposing of any documents with PHI, do NOT put them into a waste can. Instead, place discarded documents with PHI into containers marked for shredding.
- ★ If you have questions about the use or disclosure of PHI, contact the health district's Privacy Officer or Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator.

MRC Volunteer Liability

Persons who volunteer to serve in a Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) unit could be protected from liability for injuries to persons treated by the MRC through various provisions of state and federal law. *(Note that in all cases the facts of the situation will determine if liability protections apply.)*

Code of Virginia § 44-146.23 (Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Law of 2000)

- MRC volunteers while engaged in emergency service and activities should be immune from liability for negligence caused when providing medical and health services so long as they are doing so under supervision of the VDH.
 - An emergency includes the threat of an occurrence that could cause substantial harm, preparing for disasters, and the prevention of injury.
- Additionally, during an emergency, those volunteers who are licensed or certified to render health care services should receive immunity from negligence when they gratuitously render aid using their skills.

Code of Virginia § 2.2-3600 et seq., (State Government Volunteers Act)

- MRC volunteers may enjoy the protection of the Commonwealth's sovereign immunity if they are deemed to be a volunteer of VDH.

Code of Virginia § 8.01-225.02 may provide certain liability protection for health care providers during declared disasters.

- In the absence of gross negligence or willful misconduct, any health care provider who responds to a disaster shall not be liable for any injury or wrongful death of any person arising from the delivery or withholding of health care when (i) a state or local emergency has been or is subsequently declared in response to such disaster, and (ii) the emergency and subsequent conditions caused a lack of resources, attributable to the disaster, rendering the health care provider unable to provide the level or manner of care that otherwise would have been required in the absence of the emergency and which resulted in the injury or wrongful death at issue.

Code of Virginia § 8.01-225.01 - may provide protection from liability in cases where a provider is alleged to have abandoned his own patients while helping out in a declared emergency.

Code of Virginia § 8.01-225 (Good Samaritan Act)

- If MRC members are actually assisting ill or injured people at a "scene of an accident, fire, or any life-threatening emergency" the Good Samaritan Act may apply.
Federal Law: Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) Pub. L. 109-148
- If the MRC's activities relate to the dispensing of drugs or devices in an emergency situation, the PREP Act might apply.
- During a public health emergency, the Secretary of HHS may appoint MRC volunteers as intermittent disaster response personnel, which grants them the legal protections when they are working within the scope of their Federal employment as members of the MRC federal deployment cadre.

Liability & Risk Management

Virginia Medical Reserve Corps volunteers are covered by VDH's Risk Management policy for daily public health activities when under the direction of VDH and abiding by VDH volunteer policies. (Virginia Code 2.2-1837 and 2.2-1840)

- This includes up to \$2 million in Tort/Medical Malpractice Liability and up to \$10,000 for medical payment claims.

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the information above. I realize that there are civil and criminal penalties for the unauthorized use and disclosure of PHI. I will abide by the volunteer policies and guidelines when performing my duties as a Medical Reserve Corps volunteer for the VDH.

Volunteer Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____



NWMRC Volunteer Risk, Immunization and Insurance Statement

Volunteer, please initial each applicable paragraph:

- _____ **Health Professionals:** As a volunteer health professional for the Northwest Medical Reserve Corps, I certify that I will only perform duties that I am licensed to perform.
- _____ **Health Professionals:** If I am at risk of blood or body fluid exposure in this volunteer capacity, I understand the universal precautions and health risks of exposure. I have had my Hepatitis B, Varicella, MMR, and Tdap immunizations, and **I will provide documentation of all dates of immunization* prior to any deployment so that I may safely perform duties that may risk exposure.**
- _____ **All Volunteers:** I understand that, as a volunteer and while serving in a volunteer capacity, I am covered under the State's self-insurance programs for general liability and professional liability as if a State employee. I am not, however, covered by worker's compensation insurance if I am injured while working as a volunteer.

Signature of Volunteer, Date

Printed Name of Volunteer

Signature of NWMRC Coordinator, Date

Note:

Volunteers who have not been immunized against Hepatitis B may not be given duties which risk blood or body fluid exposure until they have received two doses of vaccine and plan to complete a third.

Volunteers performing any assignment as an MRC volunteer that involve risk of exposure may receive the vaccine from the Local Health District at no charge. Volunteers planning to provide less hours will be charged for the vaccine or they may volunteer only for duties involving no risk of exposure.

* Titers or History of Disease may be sufficient proof of immunization, per the discretion of the Immunization Manager or Nurse Manager of the Local Health District